CHAPTER FIVE

000 WHEN I was about five years old, my young brother, the third child of the family, died suddenly and created a gap of about seven years between me and the next child. My elder brother and I thus grew up apart from my younger sisters for a good part of our childhood.

357 • 524 Two boys were brought up to play with my brother and help my mother with the garden: I was given Mya Shwe to play with. A-Shwe and I were very attached to each other and liked the same games. Burmese children are not as interested in dolls, balls, animals and other toys of the European child; our treasures were chiefly in the form of seeds which play the same part in Burmese children's games as balls do in Western games. We had *go-nyin*, round flat seeds about two inches wide, from a jungle creeper which grew in my grandmother's garden in Ye. We rolled these along the ground to hit other go-nyins, like ninepins. When the family ate custard apples we collected all the seeds and washed them. These seeds provided us with several games; we scattered them in front of us and tried to flick as many as possible into a hole dug into the ground, or sometimes to flick each seed to touch another, removing one each time it touched until we could clear all the scattered seeds.

524 262 We could do this with tamarind seeds too: these were pretty black shining ones. We could get them from the kitchen but always preferred to take one of the boys on walks to tamarind trees. Hla Aung climbed the tree and brought down a cluster of fruits surrounded by delicate feathery leaves. We took a packet of salt along and ate the acid fruit dipped in salt, against all orders; we shredded the leaves till we got a big pile, wrapped them with the rest of the salt in stout paper, buried it a few inches in the ground and then all took turns at jumping on the spot, shouting: "*Bok-hsi-yay-Hsan, Hsan*: Oh pressed oil, come sprinkle, sprinkle." The moisture from the fresh leaves came out with the stamping and dissolved the salt, making a lovely savoury mess of the crushed leaves which we unearthed after a while and ate greedily. Then A-Shwe and I carried home the seeds to add to our collection.

524 301 *Kha-yay si* also we collected. These are seeds of the *kha-yay*, a tall tree which scatters its ripe fruit on to the ground where they lie until they dry, and shed their flesh and leave the seeds hidden amongst the

grass and leaves for us to find. But expeditions to the kha-yay trees were approved of because the tree also scatters pretty white starry flowers of a delicate fragrance; the beautiful ladies in my dreams always wore *kha yay pan* in their hair. A-Kyi took us on these walks; we collected seeds, and the flowers we deposited in cane sieve trays; when we got home we helped her to thread them in garlands, the first for the altar, next for my mother's hair and the rest for A-Kyi and the girls. Our tiniest seeds were the *yway si*, seeds of the *adenanthera* tree, bright red and black seeds about the size of an orange pip. Goldsmiths use them as their lowest unit of weight, ninety-six of these seeds forming one tola. They were very difficult to find and I used to pun and call them *ma-yway si* (cannot pick seeds), but it was exciting to turn over a leaf and see the seed suddenly, like a bright ladybird asleep.

My brother was very scornful about our girlish *sètauk-tè*, seed flicking games, but sometimes when Hla Aung and Hla Maung were working he would join in the *son-la ma-la* game, guessing whether a pile of seeds was *son*, a pair, that is even; or *ma*, female, that is odd. We could play this to gamble our privileges or possessions on the strength of guessing right. I always annoyed my brother at this game; when it came to my turn to pose the question I would take as great a pile as my two hands could cover because I loved counting. My father told me I was mathematical, and so I had counted everything I could; I knew the number of steps leading up to every pagoda we had visited, how many matches there were in a box, how many holes the lattice work round our house contained, and now I counted hundreds of custard apple seeds while my brother tried his best not to hit me, to swallow his impatience to see whether he had guessed right or wrong. He himself hated to count.

On moonlight nights my mother gave permission for A-Kyi and the other girls to play with us in the company of the male servants and clerks. We played *bi-yaung-tan*, the comb seller, in which we formed a long row one behind the other to form the teeth of a comb, and after a long altercation between the head of the row—the seller—and the catcher, the latter tried to catch the end person on the row. Or we drew lines of white lime on the red gravel road outside and played *htok-si-tan*, in teams, one team "keeping" the lines and the other dashing through until a member got trapped by the keepers. I can still see the long line of the human comb waving sinuously as the players ran to and fro, and the straight white lines of the htok-si-tan, as patterns in the flood of moonlight. They were invariably broken by a bout of "cock-fighting" to exhaust everyone's legs and lungs and spirits before bed.

The Burmese representation of a cock walk is to sit on the haunches, and then slide each foot forward and sideways while in that position, in

• 524 imitation of the webbed feet of a fowl. Done in quick tempo it becomes an acrobatic or a dancer's feat to sitters on chairs, but Burmans do it easily. We broke up into two teams and put out a prize cock in turn. The two cocks face each other and shuffle out their legs slowly to the rhythm of the accompanying verse: a slow and measured beat at first, then a sudden quickening with the acceleration of the rhythm, until at the crow given by the teams both go all out, quicker and quicker until one is exhaused and falls out vanquished. This is what we sang in chorus:

Kyet Hpa ta nyin	Two cocks, a fine pair
Taw go win	Walk in the forest dare
Maung Yin la, lay hnin pyit.	Comes Maung Yin and shoots with bow.
Ma pyit ba hnin,	O Maung Yin, don't shoot so,
Maung Yin yè	Styes will on your eyelids
Kyet-tet su tat tè.	grow.*
Bè beka su su	On the left eye, one two!
Nya beko su su	On the right eye, one two!
Khut laik gya so thu-ngè-gyin!	Come my friend then let us fight it!
Aw-ee-ee-ee-uu!	Cock-a-doodle doo!
Nga do kyet hpa naing naing	Our cock will win it, win it!
Thu do kyet hpa shon shon.	Their cock will finish, finish!

Some of the games included forfeits, but the forfeits were of a broad comicality, dragging the victim by the ear, or if it happened to be one of the younger servants, rubbing soot on his face. Robbing stones from under the care of a guardian keeping watch over them within a circle was stealing the eggs from a mother tortoise; the postless figure in General Post was a *khway-yu*, mad dog; blind man's buff was *bok-ta-lon tauktè*, a tucktoo with a buff.

776 357 We spent a lot of time with A-Kyi and the men about the house. It was they who filled our world with bogies and spirits who were no less real to them than they were to us. We were warned not to be too greedy, or we would turn into *peik-tas* in the next existence, great tall spirits with voracious appetites and mouths the size of a needle's eye, or others with mouths like yawning caverns wide enough to swallow a pig, but no stomachs to receive the food. We were told that miserly and avaricious people would never be parted from their possessions which would follow them into their next existence, when they would be *ok-ta-sauk*, pictured for us as assuming the guise of fair girls with thanakha on their

[753] *There is a belief that styes are retribution for the killing of a cock.

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CHAPTER II

SCHOOL DAYS

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I SUPPOSE Englishmen will never get rid of the notion that monastic schools must needs be dull and dismal, that hours of study only alternate with seasons of austerity and rough punishments. The uninhabited, almost deserted, appearance of the Burmese kyoung; its isolated position; the solemn, restful front which it always preserves, no matter how lightened up by profuse gilding and the carved magnificence of its panels and eaves' boards, or how embowered in rich and waving foliage; the austere aspect and slow-paced gait of the mendicants in their sad yellow robes—all these things inevitably encourage the foreigner in the belief that the monotony and the discipline must crush all life and light-heartedness out of the young scholars.

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Nothing, however, can be farther from the actual fact. No Etonian, no old Rugbeian, can look back with greater delight on triumphs on the river or in the football field, than the grown-up Burman does on his early days at the Pôngyi Kyaung. There are no rough games to remember, it is true, no strivings of any kind with members of another institution. Those things do well enough for a cold-country people. The Burman's reminiscences are of a quieter kind. There was the emulation with the chin lôn, the wicker football, to see who could keep it longest in the air by dexterous use of knee, foot, shoulder, thigh, and cheek. How it relieved the body and freshened the mind after hours of poring over little hand-blackboards, covered with cramped words and letters, in the quiet rooms inside. Then there were the games at gônnyinhto, an elementary combination of skittles

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and ninepins, played with the big flat seeds of a jungle creeper. Pleasant they were under the shade of the great mango and pipul trees and the lofty cocoa-nut and palmyra palms, and exciting were the games, so that the customary stillness of the place was rudely broken upon by disputing voices, till a monk would come out and bring all back to work again as a penance. Then during the work there was the fun of the writing hour, when everybody had to write out maxims and prayers on his little parabaik with a clumsy pointed steatite pencil. There were always some stiff-fingered big pupils who could not manage to write their copy neatly or correctly, and as punishment had to take the good writers on their backs and march ruefully up and down the long schoolroom during pleasure. Sometimes they were thrashed, but the other punishment was the more dreaded. Then there was the schoolmaster monk, who would tell fairy stories of the other three great islands which lie in the sea round about Myinmo mountain; of the half-moon-faced western islanders, and the wondrous tree that bore everything eatable one could wish for and delivered it ready cooked; the joys of the six heavens of the Nats and the grisly horrors of Nga-yè, with its fearful ages of fantastic punishments. Every now and again travelling necromancers and hmaw sayās would spend a night or two at the monastery, and in recompense for the little delicacies and odds and ends of food which good-natured neophytes would get for them, used to tell stories of witchery and marvel. Sometimes there would be a sā-haw ā, a kind of cyclic poet, who knew half the zats in the language by heart, and would recite a little just for practice. Or a tattooing sayā would come round and mark some particularly favoured youth with a quaint figure. Discussion as to its meaning and probable virtues would be carried on in the shadowy evenings for months afterwards. Varieties of this kind recur to the old Burman as he thinks of the school days long ago, and he sighs with as much conviction as any European that there are no days so happy as the school days.

English rule has disturbed old customs a good deal in the province, but even now we may say that, as an invari-

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CHAPTER XXXVII

CHESS

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I DO not say that the Burmese invented chess, either for the world or themselves. As latter-day English dramatists "adapt" from the French, so Burmese play-writers steal from the Hindoos, and possibly the game of chess was got in the same way. But there is a considerable diversity in one respect. The plays are rendered into Burmese with a stupid fidelity. The sayās do not even take the trouble of altering the names of men and places, and the only difference in the pieces is that the lubyets, and occasionally even the actors of higher parts, introduce "gag" of a comic and local description to satisfy the national demand for fun and frolic, and to carry down the prosiness of the staid Hindoo. Chess may have been taken over in a similar way, and altered after the same fashion. I remember once, indeed, hearing an enthusiastic player in Rangoon claim the invention of the game for an ancient Talaing queen. She was passionately fond of her lord; he was equally fond of fighting; and to keep him by her, and at the same time out of the dangers of the wars, she invented the game of chess. The story has a certain pathos about it, and it would be pleasant to believe it true; but I never came across any other Burman who had ever heard the story, and am afraid the old sitduyin player was romancing. But if the Burmans did take the first notion from India, they have greatly altered the game, and not less improved than altered it.

It is generally believed that it is to the Hindoos that the world owes this most purely intellectual of games. Sir William Jones was quite positive on the point, and quotes

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from the Bhawishya Puran. This seems all the more mysterious when he proceeds: "The beautiful simplicity and extreme perfection of the game, as it is commonly played in Europe and Asia, convinces me that it was invented by one effort of some great genius; not completed by gradual improvements, but formed, to use the phrase of Italian writers, by the first intention." But the European game is as different from the old Hindoo as the Burmese is from either. The Sanskrit name was cha-tur-anga—literally, the four members of an army: elephants, horses, chariots, and foot-soldiers. But the Hindoo game had four armies on the board; yellow and black against green and red. Each army had a corner of the board to itself, and there were usually four players. One of the allied armies on either side attacked the immediately opposed force in flank, and therefore had an immense advantage at the start. Moreover, the allies were never sure of one another. It was allowed, and even recommended, to indulge in treachery. The black king might, in the heat of battle, attack and depose his yellow friend, uniting the two armies under himself against the green and red foe. However consonant this might be with the national character, it can hardly be claimed as a special beauty in the game. A ship, or boat, also figured somewhat mysteriously in the warfare. Moreover, the rule that the piece to be moved was determined by a throw of the dice, by still further complicating the game, virtually ruined all scientific play, and robbed it of more than half of its interest as an exercise of purely intellectual skill. When a cinque was thrown, the king or a pawn had to be moved; when a quarte, the elephant; a trois, the horse; a deux, the boat. With such a method it was impossible to forecast the game—or, in fact, to work on any leading idea at all. Nevertheless, the Hindoo game is undoubtedly very ancient, and has certainly the oldest history of any known form of chess. It is alluded to in the most ancient law-books. The wife of Ravan, King of Lunka (Ceylon), is said to have invented it to amuse her spouse with the image of field war while his capital was besieged, 5000 years ago, by Rama, with his wild hordes of barbarian mountaineers, derisively called monkeys, or satyrs, in the great Indian epic. The Hindoo

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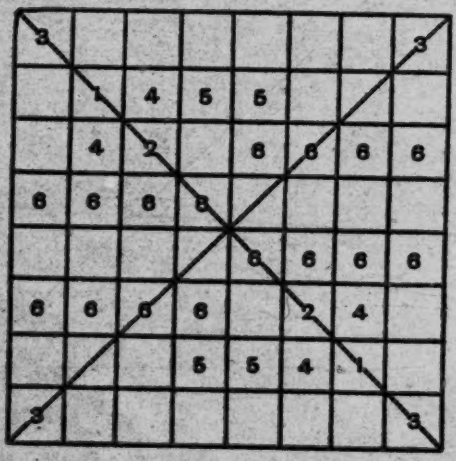
game, then, if it really be the first idea, has been no less altered by us than by the Burmans, as well as by the Persians. 524 ● 171

The Burmese arrangement of the pieces differs entirely from the Hindoo, though we may, perhaps, imagine a reminiscence of the four armies in the arrangement of the pawns. The pieces are as follows :— 524

1. Min = one king.
2. Sikkè = one lieutenant-general.
3. Yittā = two war-chariots.
4. Sin = two elephants.
5. Myin = two horsemen.
6. Nè = eight pawns, or foot-soldiers.



The king has the same moves as in the English game, but cannot "castle." Sikkè can move diagonally in advance, or retrograde one square at a time. The yittās have the same power as the English castle or rook. The sins have five moves, one square at a time—one direct forward, two diagonally forward, and two diagonally backwards. An elephant cannot walk straight backwards, nor can he go sideways. The myins have precisely the same power as the English knight. The pawns act in the same way as in the English game, except that in the initial move they can only advance one square. They may become sikkè, in the event of that piece being taken, by advancing to the diagonal line which stretches across the board. When, however, the pawn replaces the dead leader, he is not allowed to remain on the square where he gained the distinction. He must be placed as one of the eight surrounding checks, at the player's option, and therefore often falls a victim to his new-gained eminence.

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524 From the Q.'s pawn to the Q.'s R.'s pawn, the nè are placed on the third square. From the K.'s pawn to the K.'s R.'s pawn, they are placed on the fourth square in direct *échelon*. The first move, therefore, takes a pawn. The pieces may be arranged behind the pawns according to fancy or judgment. The formation represented in the figure is considered the best among Rangoon players.

Either player, however, may adopt another line of battle. He may strengthen either wing, or expose the king, according as he estimates his opponent's abilities, or the peculiarities of his play. In some respects this may be done in such a way as to be tantamount to giving a piece to an inferior player. The pawns, however, never vary in position. The board is a huge thing like an enlarged foot-stool, or a tea-table with rudimentary legs, the players squatting on mats. There is always heavy betting on the games; and when a famous player comes in from the district or over from Maulmein to measure strength with the Rangoon cracks, the excitement is wonderful, and often furnishes occasion for free fights, such as the Burmese, in their sturdy, hot-blooded way, delight in as much as any schoolboy or devotee of town-and-gown rows.

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The Burmese game, as well in the names and powers of the pieces as in the liberty of individual arrangement, is thus, it will be allowed, much more like a real battle than any other recognised form. The elephant is particularly well calculated for defending the king where he is most vulnerable.

War-chariots are decidedly more appropriate to active warfare than castles. Indeed the Briton must acknowledge that the English nomenclature is bad. There was a time certainly when bishops used to buckle on their armour, and charge across the field of fight; but their disestablishment in that way came about long before the day of Mr. Miall. Boadiceas and Shan amazon leaders are too rare nowadays to have queens careering about the board as a regular thing, dealing slaughter for their less nimble spouses. The Burmese general has powers sufficient to elevate him above his men, and is yet not so loftily supreme as the mail-clad knights of romance; while if he is laid low, it is not too violent a change

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for the gallant foot-soldier who may win the marshal's bâton. On the whole, the Burmese game is undeniably a good one; far superior to the Hindoo, or the Persian, though possibly not requiring the skill and calculation of the European form.

It may perhaps be said that the Burmese would be more likely to get their game from their Mongolian relations than from the Hindoos. This is historically improbable, and a comparison of the games bears out the belief. The Chinese, as usual, claim for themselves priority in the discovery of the game. Unfortunately, however, they fix a date when it was invented, and this is long after the time when the Aryan game is first spoken of. Three hundred and seventy years after Confucius (B.C. 174), Hung Ko-chi sent a warlike expedition into the Shensi country, under a mandarin called Hem Sing. After one successful campaign, the troops went into winter quarters. Shensi lies in the north-west, and the weather was very cold; and the soldiers thought of their families, and wanted to go home. Hem Sing, who was a great military genius, invented the game of chess to occupy their minds and foster their military ardour. The soldiers were so delighted with it that they forgot the inclemency of the weather, and their wives and children at home, in the excitement of the new game. So the winter passed away, and in the spring-time Hem Sing took the field again and conquered the entire province, in consequence of which Hung Ko-chi assumed the title of Emperor, and chess was held in the greatest reverence ever after. So says the book of Chinese Annals.

The Chinese game is a very odd one. The pieces are played, not on the squares, but on the lines. I should have mentioned before that in none of the Eastern games are the squares differently coloured. Midway between the opposed forces flows a river. The king on either side is shut up inside a fortress, out of which he cannot move, but can shift about from one side to the other as much as he pleases. On either side of the fortress are two princes, his sons, who are equally bound to stick to the side assigned to them. There are a couple of elephants in either army, which, however, being very heavy, cannot cross the slender plank-bridge thrown over the stream for the passage of the other troops.

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They therefore remain on the defensive. There are also pieces called pau—bombardiers or rocket-men—with curious powers. They can move the whole length of the board, in the fashion of the castle. If an adversary's piece intervenes, they can take the pawn or piece immediately behind it, but cannot kill direct. Students of the Persian game will be reminded of the power of their elephant. It will be seen from this cursory description that the Burmans can hardly owe their game to the Chinese. Shin Gautama sent us Buddhism from "the Middle Country";[1] it is possible that the game of chess came from India also. But if so, while

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Burmese Buddhism has hardly changed at all, and remains much more like the original teachings of the Master than the faiths of Ceylon, Nepaul, and Thibet, the game of chess has been greatly altered, and I think I may venture to say vastly improved.

[1] Myizimadetha, not the "Middle Kingdom" of the Chinese.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII

GAMES

A VERY favourite game with Burmans of all ages is the gônnyinto pwè. The name is very suggestive. Gôn or hkôn means to jump, and nyin is to deny or bluster, and there is no doubt of the fitness of the implication. A more noisy and contentious game, not even omitting the uproariousness of the English enormities known as grab or pit, it would be difficult to find. Most writers on Burma have passed over gônnyin[illegible]ing lightly, as a simple, harmless, children's game. It would be well if it were only that, though the monks at the pôngyi kyaung often sally forth in great wrath (most dangerous for their future state), and armed with a stout bamboo, to put a stop to the clamorous disputes of the schoolboys over their seeds. But the police officers would tell a very different tale. Grown-up men play also, the quarrels sometimes end in assault and murder, and always in reckless gambling. Beinshu, opium-eaters, who with all respectable Burmans stand for types of iniquity, a kind of epitome of vice, often have as much as two or three hundred rupees on a single game, and the results of unrestrained gambling are best known to civilised people who frequent Monte Carlo. Consequently the police keep a sharp eye on grown-up gônnyinto players, and if a party is caught, they are all punished heavily for gambling, the daing, or keeper of the ground, being fined heaviest of all. For there are regular alleys kept for the purpose, the daing, or proprietor, carefully smoothing the ground, moistening it delicately in the hot weather, and keeping it from getting sodden during the monsoon. He charges his customers a small fee for the right to play, usually an anna in the rupee,

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524 keeps a supply of seeds ready, and acts as umpire in cases of doubt, or when a tie has to be played off.

The game is played with the seeds of a huge creeper, the *Entada Pursætha*, whose pods are five feet long and six inches broad, and the beans are large flat things, about an inch in diameter, and shaped like a lily or lotus leaf, or the flattened-out gizzard of a fowl. They are made to stand on the stalk side, flat face foremost, a little more than a diameter apart in a long row, and the object of the player is, as in bowls and ninepins, to knock down as many as possible. The players use seeds called do, exactly similar to those they aim at, or occasionally iron rings, and the distance from which they do so is agreed upon beforehand, but is never less than five or six yards. The do is spun away in crossbow fashion from the forefinger of the left hand, drawn back by the thumb and finger of the right. As the seeds aimed at are all in a line, there is plenty of room for skill in the way of putting a heavy bias on, as well as in the by no means easy matter of preventing the bean from jumping up and missing altogether. Some old players have a wonderful knack of getting a strong parabolic curve on, which succeeds in levelling a great part of the line. The difficulty of the thing cannot be realised till one has made an attempt one's self, and the result of a few experiments is usually greatly to raise the estimation of gônnyinto as a game of skill.

There are a great many ways of playing it. First, it may be premised that the ordinary value of a seed is two annas, about threepence—that at any rate is the price usually charged by the daing, who always has a great supply of them. Having got his seeds, the player puts down as many as he pleases in the row, five perhaps or ten. There is usually a preliminary dispute about some one who has not put down so many as the others, yet claims an equal chance of winning in the game. These quarrels, after having been noisily fought for a quarter of an hour or so, are referred to the decision of the ground keeper, who settles the matter off-hand, seldom knocking a man out as long as he is sure that he has no more seeds to stake. Then it has to be settled who is to have first shot, naturally among good players a very considerable advantage. This is settled by a preliminary

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tournament for the best of one or three shots, the players following one another in the order of their success in the trial. Then it is settled how the game is to be played. Sometimes it is the obvious, elementary way of each man taking the seeds he knocks down, sometimes it resolves itself into a contest for everything staked, the man who knocks down most taking all the seeds. There are of course numerous bets, but they are more frequently disposed in backing one player against another than in selecting a single individual as the probable eventual winner.

This method, however, of endeavouring to knock down the greatest number of seeds, which is of course the commonest with children, is not so much affected by grown-up gamblers as other elaborations of the game. A favourite form is that called ngalet ngalôn, where the object is, in five shots to knock down five seeds, neither more nor less. This is not so easy as it might seem, for the seeds are not like marbles, and it is hardly less difficult to make them go perfectly straight than it is to put on the proper "side." Most men try to knock down all five at their first attempt, and then let their remaining seeds go anyhow. Veterans, however, declare that the safest way is to knock down the fifth from the end of the line with your first shot. It then lies as a kind of barrier to prevent the other four, when knocked down, from rolling about and upsetting more than the proper number. The seeds when hit hard certainly have very eccentric methods of spinning and wobbling about. If there are ties, the men of course play off, and the winner takes the whole pool, if the collection of seeds may be so called. The best play is almost always seen in these ngalet ngalôn contests. The children's form, that of knocking down the greatest number in one or three shots, is called pwet-tha, and is certainly the commonest, except with the avowed gamblers. There are besides these two main forms many other variations occasionally introduced, the commonest being daungpyit and pedan. In the former the seeds are placed in the usual line, but all except the centre are lying on their sides. The players stand much farther away, and the object is to hit the seed standing up. Any one who does so carries off all. If one of those lying down is hit, the seeds from it

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524 to the extremity of the line are taken. In pedan the seeds are placed in a big circle. Some one seed, either at one of the sides or at the back, is fixed upon to be hit. Any one who does so takes all, but if any other seed is knocked over you have to pay forfeit, and add one to the circle. This is, perhaps, the most outrageously noisy form of all, and, like the daungpyit, is very seldom played by any but children.

The daing or ground keeper's services are constantly being called for. A long-armed man is accused of delivering too far forward; some one has got an exceptionally big do to aim with; one of the seeds knocked over does not fall down flat, but leans up against another; somebody hits a seed already knocked down by somebody else, and by means of it manages to level some of those left standing, though his own seed never touches them; cases of this kind are always cropping up and being referred to the umpire amidst boisterous statements and precedents referred to by everybody present, for the betting spectators are often more deeply interested in the matter than the actual players. Then the police burst in and carry them all off to the lock-up, and they are duly fined for gambling, and English residents who look upon gônnyinto as only an elementary kind of marbles are astonished that people should get themselves into trouble for such a trifle. But for all that, gônnyinto, in its way, requires quite as much skill as either bowls or curling, and judgment and delicacy of touch are quite as essential as in billiards.

526 Curiously enough, taking gônnyinto for mere childishness, most foreigners look upon "Burmese football" as a game. This is certainly not the case in so far as a "game" is a striving between one or more competitors for supremacy. There are of course different degrees of proficiency, but one man cannot be pitted directly against another to see who is the better player, as you do with two lawn tennis or racket players. Primarily chinlôn, as it is called, is simply designed to exercise the body, to restore elasticity to the back and limbs cramped by sitting, reading, or writing, or even by playing chess or gônnyinto. The ball is composed of wicker-work, strips of rattan interwoven in bands so as to leave a number of pentagonal holes, and is about four

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526 any more than dancing the Highland Fling can, for judgment as to superiority in either case must be a mere matter of personal opinion, and cannot be governed by hard and fast rules.

These are practically the only outdoor national games. Boxing is a very common institution, but there is no ordinary practice in the evenings, and when a let-pwè comes off it is a regular ceremony more resembling what would be called in Europe a match, or a tournament, than a game. A good deal of agility and skill is shown, leaps into the air, and kicks with the bare feet, and violent upward knocks with the knee finding a place which would not be allowed by the "fancy." The first drawing of blood decides a contest, however slight the injury may be. But boxing is not common now. Among the Karens near Maulmein it is still regularly [571] kept up, and no young man would be successful in his courting unless he had taken part on some occasion or other at a let-pwè. In Rangoon nowadays contests are of regular occurrence at feast times, but the displays are in sheds and entry money is charged. Elsewhere they are not often seen, [562] and the rule that no women shall be present is always rigorously kept.

● 524 What may be called indoor games are numerous and various. There is a game very much like the English one known as Fox and Geese. There are three big tigers, and eleven or sometimes twelve little ones. It is called legwet kya, and the object is for the big tigers to hunt down on a draught board and eat the little ones. If, however, the cubs can corner the big ones, and prevent them from taking a leap, the latter have to succumb—starve to death in fact. Another game called pasit, or chwe pyitthi, or ansa pyitthi is a steeplechase kind of arrangement, and is a favourite with children and simple country people. It is played on a board shaped and divided like that in the figure.

Cowries are used instead of dice, and the object is to complete the tour of the board as fast as possible, and to take as many opponents as you can on the way. Thus if there were two playing, the first thrower would enter at *a*, and having reached *b*, would continue from *a* to *c*, from *c* to *d*, and so on. The second would commence at *a* also, but

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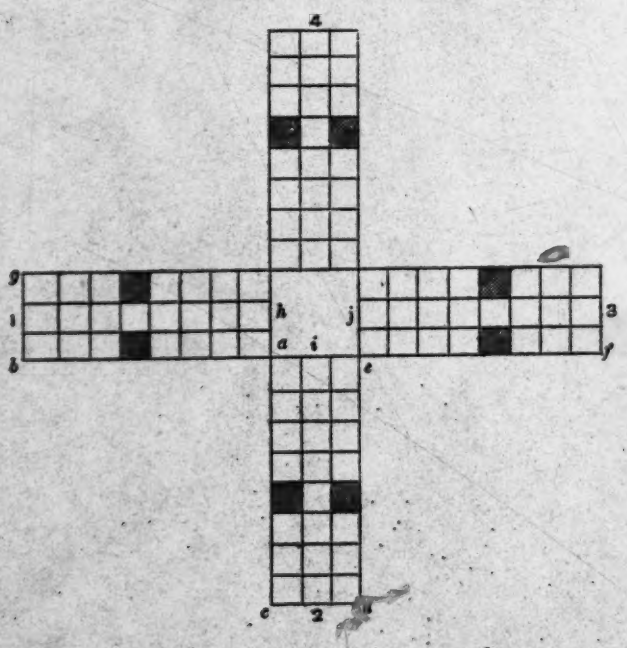
proceed first to *c*, thence to *d*, and so on. A third would start from *e* towards *f*, and a fourth in the remaining arm.

The method is as follows. Six cowries (chwe) are taken in the hand and thrown into a plate or cup; if one falls upside down it is called sè, and counts ten; two, called pa, scores two; three, thôn, is the same in value; four, le, equals four; five upside down, called taseit, scores twenty-five. When



all are on their backs, it is called baya, and counts twelve. When all six fall on their faces, chauk, and the value six.

You have three throws to start with, and can only enter with a ten or a twenty-five; after entering you can have only one throw at a time. If you are lucky enough, you may enter two or even three racers, but if you throw three tens running, or three twenty-fives consecutively, the hand is lost to you, you cannot enter even one. If you overtake an opponent and come on to the same square with him, you kill him and he has to go back to the starting-post, but only if you fall on the same square, and not if he is on one of the shaded squares, called poh or kyah, which are coloured

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524 red or green on the board. In this latter case you lose your throw. The game is won by returning home first. Thus the first player having rounded *g*, comes down the middle course and finishes at *h*; the second player at *i*; the third at *j*, and so on. Any number can play, and if there are four, or more, and even numbers, partnerships are formed. When three or more play, it is called mèthida.

525 The game is simple and harmless enough, and as there is little chance of gambling over it, pasit is but little in favour with people in the big towns. Tônbu lein, cheating with the weight of the lime used in betel-nut chewing, is much more to their taste. This lime, a little of which is smeared on the leaf of the betel-vine that wraps round the nut, is, if of fine quality, often sold by its weight in rupees. Two confederates arrange a speculation together. One of them picks out an eligible-looking bumpkin in the street, some rice-farmer, who has come in with his boat-load of paddy; or a raftsman, who has brought down a lot of teak logs; or a pious man come to worship at the pagoda. He gets into conversation with the intended victim—asks him for a light for his cheroot, perhaps, and brings round the talk to tônbu. Then he says he has got a fine sample of it, and draws a packet out of his pocket. The unsuspecting taw-tha admires it and is asked how much he thinks there is. He guesses three rupees weight. The speculator happens, singularly enough, to have a little pair of scales in the folds of his waistcloth. The lime is duly weighed, and the countryman proves to be right—Burmans have a natural faculty for estimating by the eye. The scales and the lime are put away, when up comes the confederate, who has been loitering about at a distance. He pretends to recognise a friend in our farmer, with his old-fashioned zig-zag paso and red-tanned face. After explanations he asks who his friend—the man with the tônbu—is. The latter immediately introduces himself, produces his lime again, and asks the newcomer how much he thinks there is. He says right off, "Two rupees weight"; our taw-tha breaks in, "No there isn't." "Bet you a-seit (a quarter century, twenty-five rupees) there is." All Burmans love gambling, and the farmer straightway tables his pieces, thinking he has got rather a "soft" thing.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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The scales come into use again, and the lime weighs two rupees—it is another packet. That night the two rascals are drunk together, and the farmer makes an offering to the nats, persuaded that there is something supernatural in the matter.

Pitch and toss is common enough in Rangoon now, as is also the three-card trick, introductions of Western industry. Pitch and toss is called myauk pan—myauk is the lion and unicorn on the old "Jan Kumpani's" coin, while the pan, the "flower," is the laurel wreath on the other side. Two rupees or pice are spun, and the bystanders call. One says two tails, and if they turn up, he wins double his stake; similarly if he is equally fortunate as to his guess of two heads. If he hedges with a head and tail, he only wins what he laid. The "tossing shilling," and the "lucky penny," of Box and Cox, one of which had no head and the other two, are not by any means novelties in the Pabèdan and other disreputable streets in Rangoon.

Another sleight-of-hand trick at which the town loafers are very skilful and are constantly deluding the unwary, is a performance called kyotothi, tilting at the string. A narrow strip of hide is doubled across, and the doubled end being in the centre, it is wound round and round in a complicated way. Then one of the bystanders is asked to place either his finger or a stick into the centre. The thong is then unwound, and if the man has his finger in the doubled-up end he wins, otherwise the manipulator gathers up the money. It is obvious that manual dexterity may do a great deal in a venture of this kind, and the operator usually makes a good thing of it.

Cock-fighting is also a favourite pastime, and though forbidden by the authorities, is still carried on more or less openly in country villages and quiet streets in the towns. Thibaw's uncle, the deposed Pagān Min, who died of small-pox in 1880, was so fond of the practice that he went by the name of the cock-fighting king. In sporting villages pretty nearly every house has its kyet-hpa, or its taik-kyet, the latter, splendid-looking birds, being bred specially for their pluck in fighting.

Buffalo fights, which used to be great festivals in the

It will be noted that most of 342
the living takes place on the downstairs floor where the bedrooms and [512]
the porch are located. The altar is also located downstairs [778]

U Myaing explained that the altar should be upstairs but it was more convenient downstairs. The posts on which the house rests rise a few feet above the ground. In all there are about 15,050 cubic feet enclosed by the house. Of this amount 1450 cubic feet are used for sleeping quarters for the family, 729 cubic feet is devoted to religion in the alter room, and 800 cubic feet is used in the kitchen for preparing food. The rest of the space is for social functions including visitors and relaxation, with some space used for storage.

In Puthso there were no beds and no chairs except for one deck chair 352
which had been handed down to U Myaing from his father. There were [428]
however, five small stools about four inches high and measuring about 12" by 6". These stools did not have four legs but instead were made of one flat board hammered onto two boards laid on their ends. They had one four legged stool measuring 2½ feet by 1½ feet and about 8 inches high. This was utilized as a chess board. (U Myaing and three or four [524]
others played chess four or five times a month in the afternoons. Their house was the only one in the village to possess a board and chessmen, U Myaing having received it from a cousin.) There was another stool about two feet high and one and a half feet square to hold the KYAUK KAR [415]
food carrier.

There were also two round Burmese tables. The smaller one was about three feet in diameter and one foot tall. Ma Aye Myaing could not estimate the diameter of the larger one but she remembered that eight men could eat at a time at this table, and that people who gave charities often came to [426]
borrow it for that reason.

There was a three legged stand for holding two water pots. The pots were placed on two horizontal triangles formed one about two feet above the other by the peices of wood holding together the three upright feet of the stand. This stand was made by U Myaing at home.

They also possessed two cupboards both of which had been handed down [428]
to U Myaing by his father. The first one, used for holding clothes, was three TAUNG high, two and one half TAUNG wide and little less than one

The whole family goes to the ANYEIN or marionette shows which are quite rare and sometimes not even seen in a year. If it is held 536
this held during the months of TAGU, KASON and TAZAUNGMON. In the villages an ANYEIN gives over at about one or two in the morning.

The people from their village also go over to Karen villages 536
when they have puppet shows at cremation ceremonies. Some of the 764
Karens bury their dead and after three or four years they exhume the corpse to burn the bones and store the ashes away. At the ceremony for the cremation of the bones they stage these puppet shows and the members of U Myaing's family go to witness them.

In Pathwe the PYAEIK (stage performance or PWE) has not yet made an appearance. Ma Aye 536
Myaing had seen it in another village where she had to pay an admission charge of four annas. This was the only time she had seen it. On that occasion the show was followed by an enactment of one [779]
of the birth stories of Buddha and this went on till morning.

CHILDREN'S GAMES:

The children used to play several games. One of these was to 524●
blind-fold one of their number and set him off in the direction of 857
an iron bar suspended about 25 yards away. The blindfolded boy was given an iron rod and it was his task to try and hit the suspended bar with his rod.

These games were played at a sports meeting organised for [621]
children and everyone in the village turned out to watch. Another item was the candle race where the children were given a lighted candle each and made to run a race. Then there was a cock fighting contest where two girls sat back on their haunches, faced each other and began to swing each knee forward alternatively until one or the other gave up. There was also a needle and thread race, a sack race, a one-legged race and an egg and spoon race. Each of these races were confined to only two contestants at a time.

GONYIN:- A GONYIN is the large flat seed and is used in a game that Burmese children play - U Myaing's children included. There have to be ten players, five a side and each side has to try and hit the seeds belonging to the opposing group according to complicated rules.

In Pathwe the children used to play marbles and not the youths [369]
as is sometimes found in Rangoon. In Pathwe the adults were all

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In Pathwe -138- the adults were all occupied with the question of how to acquire money. The children played at skipping a rope. There is also a game where two children sit facing each other and raise progressively higher and higher barriers with their feet and their hands, while a third child has to jump high enough to clear the obstriction. If he succeeds they raise it slightly higher and so on. If he fails, then it is his turn to provide the barrier with one while the other starts jumping from the lowest level. They also play the games "SAINTS" and "HOP-SCOTCH" Then there is a game where about 20 children stand in a circle with faces turned inwards. There is a person left outside who runs round the circle and while running, drops a small bundle of cloth behind someone's back. If that person knows of it he picks up the bundle and chases the first child round the circle and if fleet enough has an opportunity of dealing him several hard whacks before he finds shelter in the vacant place of the person following and it is then the turn of the person with the bundle to make the rounds and drop it behind someone elses back. If a person does not realise that the bundle has been laid down behind him the first person completes another round, and then picks it up himself and chases him around the circle back to his own place.

There is another game which is known as "THE HUGE LIN-MWE SNAKE" where the children form a long line by holding each other's waist from behind. Someone then has to come pretending to sell something and the head of the line makes a purchase. When the seller demands payment he is referred by each child to the one behind him until the leader shouts that he can take the person last in the line in payment if he can catch him. The seller tries to do this while the whole line wriggles and twists in an effort to foil him.

When U Myaing was young he used to play "THE TURTLE AND THE EGGS". They first had to find a person who would play as the "turtle" and to do this they recited the Burmese alphabet starting with the letter "KA" for one person and "KHA" for the second and so on round and round the circle until the letter "A" is reached. The person on whom this letter falls has to be the "turtle". He is placed in a circle with as many stones as there are people in the game.

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[868]

10. THE FIRST STEP.

of an inch thick. This custom is on the decline, and the ears of boys are not so generally pierced as they used to be. The *naddung* or women's ear-plug of gold is being replaced by the *nagát* with its slender stem (No. 241). With eldest-born girls the fête is frequently deferred until they are twelve or fourteen, and is then celebrated with all the more splendour (p. 14).

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Burman children are not weaned until the second or third year. Nevertheless they begin to receive solid food as soon as they will take it. The illusion prevails that the earlier they do so the stronger they will be. It is a [165] chief source of infant sickness and mortality, and of the smallness of the families reared. A curious feature of Burman sociality is the promiscuous suckling of infants in the circle of relatives and friends.

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Children's heads are shaved in more or less fanciful ways up to the ages of ten or twelve, after which the hair is allowed to grow long.

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The road-fronts of the houses are always peopled with children. Children are equals and are free to roam through the neighbours' houses and plots, where they are kindly noticed. Adults take in- [854] terest in their games, and make kites and reels, boats, carts and other simple toys for them.

17. THE WOODEN CRADLE (SAUNGBAN).

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18. YOUNG CHILDREN'S TOYS.

Manufactured toys are the most noticeable wares in the sale-booths. A universal toy is the seed from the giant pod of the *dò* creeper (No. 251). Like marbles with us, the seeds—*gòn-hnyin*—are the prizes of the game. In Sangermano's time (1783–1806) these games used to be played by adults. A characteristic boys' game is *sttòppyit* (No. 25). Lots are cast for riders and horses. A ball or bundle is thrown from rider to rider till a player misses the catch, when all the riders dismount and scramble with the horses for the ball. The one who secures it becomes or remains a rider as the case may be. Boys run races for their own sport and that of their elders, and race their toy boats. They fight duels with their kites, each flier seeking to saw through his opponent's kite-line, for which purpose a length of string has been roughened with sand or pounded glass. The peg-top is a favourite toy. That it is indigenous is proved by certain proverbial sayings. Burman boys are more like our own and take to European games more kindly than other Asiatics (*cf.* p. 69). The toy of the day is the tricycle, which parents will pinch themselves to provide for their children, and which the happy possessors of will make the common property of all their playmates. Where children awaken such genuine interest, punishment is rarely called for and is never

19. GAMES IN THE WATER.

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30. TOY CART.

of a savage description. Children have pretty manners; they are respectful to their elders without shyness or cringing.

Children grow up among the implements they will use in after life. Wooden mills for husking rice, tilt-hammers and mortars for pounding, cotton-seeders with geared rollers, spinning-wheels, weaving-looms and other simple machines are in every household; besides agricultural implements, carts and boats, all of which are made or kept in repair by the inmates (*cf.* p. 120). The workshops of artizans of every class are open to view, and the processes are obvious to every passer-by. The interest aroused in children is more diversified than in cold countries with their more secluded life. From mimicking the occupations of adults children learn to take part and soon begin to like a real share in them. Their trade begins with make-believe wares, then come scraps of house and garden produce till it develops into a source of pocket-money and training in business (Nos. 281, 431). The years of tutelage merge into the age of responsibility without abrupt transition. The intelligence which the school-teacher proceeds to build on has insensibly developed under conditions more than commonly favourable, which may help to account for the precocity of Burman school-children under good teaching.

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From the ages of eight to ten, boys begin attending the school of the Buddhist monastery (*kyaung*), where they are taught free by the recluse (*phôngyi*) or by his sojourner recluses (*upazin*). The spelling-book is chanted in a chorus led by a senior pupil, and is copied out with a white steatite pencil on a

31. PEG-TOPS (TOYS-PAGE).

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23. MARBLES (GON-HNYIN).

long wooden slate blackened with soot and rice-water (*thun-bôn*). The Burmese word-building is exceedingly regular and in the main phonetic (See appendix B). Reading is acquired in one term, without much effort on the part of pupil or teacher. The Burmans have a pure decimal notation in which the bugbears *eleven* and *twelve* are unrepresented. The Burmese *eleven* is literally "onety-one." Children can count up to hundreds before they come to school and can reckon up sums mentally. In arithmetic they are taught the multiplication-table and a few rules of thumb (*bedin*). In addition to the five Buddhist commandments (p. 16) and the objects of contemplation (p. 43), which the children learn in their homes, they chant passages from the Pâli scriptures in the school chorus and get other precepts by rote: such as the category of duties to parents, teachers and elders, *viz.*, reverence, support, mutual affection (*parêit*). They are taught the value of learning as an inalienable possession, together with many precepts from the *Lawkanîti* and *Mingala-thôt*; the conquests of the inner and outer worlds *Atwin-aungdyin*, *Appyin-aungdyin*, the story of the Buddha (see *The Light of Asia*) and the legendary cosmogony.

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As the result of this Buddhist system of schools, nearly half of the male and about 3 per cent. of the female population can read and write, as compared with 9 and 0·3 per cent. for men and women respectively in Bengal. The

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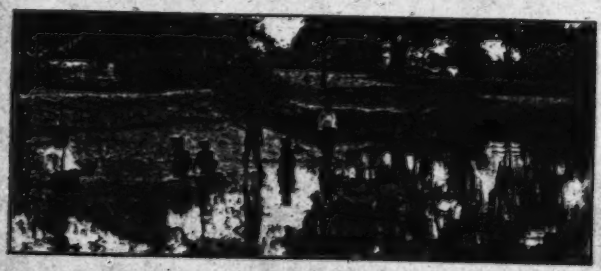

24. RACING TOY BOATS.

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25. GAME OF SITOPPYIT.

Burman average stands midway between those of Ireland and Austria on the one hand, and Italy and Spain on the other. (Report of the Census of 1891.)

The boys at the monastery-school (*kyaung-tha*) do the domestic work—sweep the floors and enclosures, attend upon the recluses, and help in collecting the daily food. Some scholars live at the *kyaung*, others have the morning meal there, others again have their meals at home. The recluse exacts no deference from his scholar, but nevertheless receives from all lay persons a spontaneous homage identical with that accorded to royal personages. In the *kyaung* the lads acquire the good breeding of their country, for it is among the recluses that the élite of the race is to be sought. In the stage next to be described, the lad completes this training, by himself sharing in the deference paid to the yellow robe, which he assumes for a season as novice. The monastery-schools are open all the year, but have a large attendance only in the rainy season or *wa*.

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Besides the monastic public schools there are private schools kept by laymen and occasionally also by women, in which girls as well as boys are taught. The subjects and methods are the same, but more time is given to arithmetic. The rules of thumb of the Indian *bodin* are being superseded by modern arithmetic, by help of the vernacular manual prepared by the missionary Stilson. A small fee is paid the lay teacher in money or in kind. Out of hours, the lay-school pupils are of use at their homes, minding their little brothers and sisters.

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26. CYCLE RACE.

The training begun in youth is never broken off. Study is a chief occupation of middle and advanced age. The teacher—*sayâ*—clerical or lay, is reverenced,

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[346
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27. VILLAGE LAY SCHOOL.

next to a parent, with a life-long devotion.

Before or after the monastic novitiate, it is the custom for the Burman lads to have themselves tattooed from the waist to the knee (No. 152). Not to submit to this ordeal is to incur the reproach of cowardice. The tattooing is an intricate pattern of animals and tracery. Owing to the extent of surface involved, the process is most painful. It occupies days or weeks, according to the fortitude of the subject, who is drugged with opium for the occasion. The instrument has a handle weighted at the butt, and a long point of bronze, split like a ruling-pen. It is worked with great rapidity. The pigment is a kind of lamp-black of the consistence of ink. It shows bluish black through the brown skin. When a Burman tucks up his loin-cloth, as he always does for work or exercise (*kaddung-chaik*), he looks as if he had black knee-breeches. As plain as the contrast is to the eye, ordinary photographic plates fail to render it. In No. 153 it appears fully. On other parts of the body the men frequently have horoscopes and cabalistic diagrams tattooed with vermilion (*ze-ut*, No. 162) for luck and bravado. The Shan practice of letting in gold and silver discs the size of two-penny pieces—beneath the skin—is sometimes imitated by Burmans as a charm against sword-cuts and bullets (*dèbyi*; *thwaddyi*). The Arakanese, who repudiate the custom of *ngwin*, ascribe it to a Burman King, who endeavoured to disguise his leprosy in this way.

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28. KITE-FLYING.

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28. PAINTING OF SHWELAUNG PAYA.

The constituted daily routine of the monastery takes no account of recreation. In practice there is a wide margin of leisure. But the wearer of the yellow robe is not seen at play. Arithmetical puzzles are the nearest approach to a game. On the other hand, the cheerfulness of the race suffers no restraint. There is decorum, without austerity or sanctimony. The severest penance laid upon the novice is temporary relegation to the secular state (*lein-byan*) for such faults as lying, theft, or killing anything. Cruelty to an animal is punished with caning.

The *yahdn* exercise no exclusive function beyond that of admitting candidates to the novitiate and the full membership of their Assembly. The affairs of the Buddhist Church are initiated and conducted by the laity. The recluses merely add, by their presence, to the religious distinction of an occasion. At the shrine the recluse is like any other pilgrim; he never is a ministrant or priest. Neither is there any altar. The only material objects to which sanctity pertains are the relics of the Buddha. The members of the Assembly know no distinctions of men, racial or social. As regards the temporal power, of whatever origin, the recluse should be absolutely passive, neither contravening the laws nor invoking them when he suffers wrong. The recluse neither denounces nor harbours the criminal, a neutral attitude of which criminals are not slow to take advantage.

When admitted to full membership of the Assembly instituted by the Buddha (*Thingé*, Pāli *Sangha*), the novice becomes *Yahdn* (*Yahdn-daw*, *Rahán*, *Arahan*), which signifies *perfected*, one advanced a stage

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153. THE CHALLENGE
(*see* p. 177).

the young wife's home, the lad working for her parents. As family comes and other daughters marry, the elder pairs are established in houses of their own. Married people are designated *ein-daung*—householders. Marriage makes no difference in the names and their prefixes. Everyone marries in Burma; the census of 1891 gave 1,306,722 husbands to 1,307,292 wives. The same census gave 102 females to 100 males of the Burman (so classed as Buddhist) population. (In Burma prostitution is confined to the large towns.)

A family of seven is considered large. The average number of house-occupants is 5.5. The cost of living of a Burman village household is 100 to 200 Rs. a year. In the towns the well-to-do spend 600 to 1000 Rs. and more, and at the present day keep a servant or two for the rough work, generally natives of India. Such accumulations of wealth as are made by individuals in India and other countries with a plutocracy and a proletariate are not paralleled among the Burmans. Nevertheless individuals amass tens of thousands of rupees, which for the most part they spend on works of religious merit. Monogamy is the received and almost universal practice in Burma. Second-wives are taken by a proportion of the officials and men of wealth. Hence it comes that the Burmans wonder more at the moderation of Europeans than at such license as they indulge. This license is not nearly so great as in India, but it is more open, corresponding to the higher status of the women of Burma, and thus it provokes more scandal in comparison. Unions of this sort among the Burmans are merely by mutual consent. A separate establishment in a different quarter of the town is maintained for the second wife or concubine (*maya-ngè*). Her children are under no disability, but she is not acknowledged by the first, and generally older, wife (*mayaji*), whose husband's love she is said to have stolen.

154. AN "ORIGINAL."

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159. CHILDREN AT THE RIVER SIDE (p. 91).

Every stranger, man or woman, is addressed *K'mbyâ*—sir, madam. There is a courteous address for nearly every relation in life. Children, in speaking to their parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts, say *Shin* and *Daw*—lord, lady; wife to husband, *Shin*; husband to wife, *Byo*, *Bya*—terms of endearment; younger brother or sister to elder, *Go*, *Maung-dyî*; elder brother to younger *Maung*; brothers to sisters, *Ma*. *Maung* and *Ma* (brother and sister) have become the ordinary prefixes to names, answering to our Mr., Mrs., Miss. These are used even by parents to their grown-up children. To inferiors and in disparagement, the plain *nga*, *mè*, *mi* are used. Middle-aged men are given the address *Go*, and old men that of *Û* (uncle), which is also the prefix to the *bwè* of the *yahán*. Great regard is conveyed by the address *Sayâ*—teacher, master. The honorific word for wife is *gadáw*, thus—*sayâ-gadáw*, *min-gadáw*. To royalty the addresses were *Gôdaw*—[illegible] self; *Ashin-Payâ*—lord of lords; *Pôn-daw-dyî*—of great glory. These titles came to be used for ministers and governors, as more euphemistic ones were devised for the kings. The same addresses are accorded by courtesy to the *yahán*, who on their part address the layman as *Tagâ*, *Tagâdaw*—supporter, great founder. The layman refers to himself as *tabyî-daw*—the honoured disciple. In other relations of life, other periphrases are used for the pronouns of the first and second persons. The plain *I* and *you*—*ngâ*, *nin*—are only used in disparagement. Thus the current phrase for *I* is *tyunbk*—the humble servant. (For women, *tyunma*.) In addressing superiors, the phrase is *tyunddw*, *Payâ-tyunddw*

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160. CHINLON GAME.—APPLIQUE WORK (p. 179).

25: Fefrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 · APl Burma
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181. CHILDREN'S TUBS AT FLOOD-TIME (p. 61).

—the slave, his lordship's humble servant. There are special honorific terms for the coming and going, eating and sleeping of royalty and of the *yahán*. The most coveted titles or appellations are those of *kyaung-tagá*, *Payá-tagá* — founder of a school, founder of a temple. The first of these is given by courtesy to persons of venerable age. The great increase of prosperity has given a corresponding impetus to the founding of such works, so that the *tagá* are more numerous than ever before. The private foundations are on a scale of unprecedented magnificence. At no period has Buddhism shone throughout the land in such resplendence as now. Personal titles and badges (*sakvé*, No. 31) used to be given by the kings. Small dignities and offices have been hereditary in many places. Nevertheless, no aristocracy has developed. One of these titles was *Thakìu* (master, lord), now assumed by all Europeans in the same way as "*sahib*" in India. Despite the punctilio in address, greetings are unusual between equals. After absence, a mere "Here you are again" and an inquiry about health—*ma-e-lâ?* At departure, "I'm off," "You're going"—*thwa dawmè*. There is nothing answering to the established *saldm* or to our "Good day," "Good-bye." The verbal salutation to the *yahán*, after obeisance, is *Gôdaw-mya thâppâyá pyippa-e lâ*—is your Grace duly provided with the canonical

182. CARVING OF CHINLON PLAYER (pp. 18, 179).

183. THE PADYA SHRINE (p. 188).

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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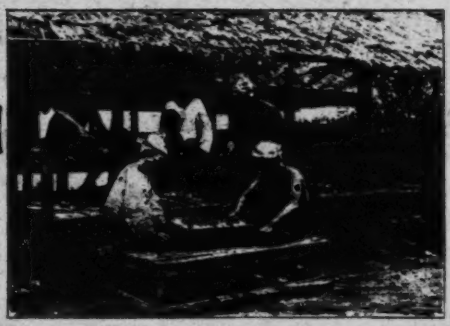

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403. CHESS.

Slashing cocoanuts (*ôngôt*) is a favourite sport in the North. A green cocoanut is balanced on the top of another, and has to be severed in two across the fibre at a blow of the sabre. This requires both power and knack. The villagers bet on who will sever the greatest number without a miss.

Cock-fighting is condemned by the popular religion, together with everything that causes pain or inflames the passions. Nevertheless, the people are greatly addicted to it; they bet heavily on their birds. A large long-legged fowl of the Shanghai type is bred for fighting. The Taláings in the South are fond of making bulls fight, especially bull buffaloes.

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The every-day outdoor sport of Burma is the *chinlôn* game. A light springy ball is made of five interlacing circles of split rattan, four or five in a tier, with large open interspaces. The object is to keep the ball up, and the only rule is that the ball may not be touched with the hand. The nearest player advances to meet it, and if he be a tyro, he is content to kick the ball up; there are no turns. A good player will send the ball into the air again and again with decreasing force till he allows it to alight in the hollow of his shoulder. Thence he lets it roll down the back of the arm and jerks it off at the elbow to catch it on the knee, and, changing his foot like a flash, strikes the ball high from the back, with the opposite sole, for another player to vary the performance in as original a way as he can (Nos. 160, 162). The game implies a perfect command of every muscle. Players are not at their best till twenty-five or thirty. There can be no winning in this game, which is played for the pure love of skill.

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404. DOMINOES.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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405. PAPT GAME.

Chess, dominoes, *pasit*, and cards, are the intellectual games. Chess (*sippayin* — 'war-lord') was probably introduced from China in ancient times. It differs in some points from the game played in Europe, but agrees with that played by Chinese settlers in Burma. The pieces are *King*, *General* (in lieu of our Queen), two *Elephants* (in lieu of our Bishops), two *Horsemen*, two *Chariots* (in lieu of our Castles or Rooks), and eight *Soldiers*. The *King* moves as in our game. The *General* moves one square at a time diagonally, the *Elephant* moves as the General, plus one square forwards, the *Horseman* moves as our Knight, the *Chariot* moves as our Rook, the *Soldiers* move as our Pawns. The pieces are set up very differently to ours :—

Chariots at Rook sqrs.		Horsemen at QB and KKt3 sqrs.	
King	„ K2.	Elephants	„ KB3 and Q2 „
General	„ K3.	Soldiers	„ {K's 4, 4th „ Q's 4,3rd „

Like other definite contests, the game of chess is played for money, unless at funeral gatherings, where games are played to pass the time, without stakes. The Burmese dominoes (*thôm-bônpè*) are made of black wood, with brass nails for points. They are held like cards, and are played down in the same way, not set as dominoes are with us. Pasteboard cards (*pè*) from Europe are common, and are to be found in every sale depôt. The staid elders alone of lay people take no part in any sort of gambling. Venial as gambling is looked upon in general, *card-player* (*pè-cha*) is a term of disparage-

406. ANDALON GAMBLING.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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408. CHINESE DICE (NIDAUNG).

ment associated with sot (*ayet-thauk*), next after which is *beinza* —opium-eater. Women do not often play chess or cards; they have a game called *pasit* (beetle-fight), somewhat resembling back-gammon.

Games of pure hazard are in great favour, especially at festival times. Chinese and Shan settlers start gambling-dens for the dissolute youth, with Chinese dice (*Nidaung*, *Angalôn*, No. 406), and the thirty-six animal lottery (*tî*, *thônzè-chaukkaung kazâ*), symbols intelligible to every nation and the meanest capacity. For *angalôn* there is a paper or cloth with compartments for six different figures of animals on which money is staked, corresponding to similar figures on a wooden cube, which is shaken in a box.

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The showmen in Burma are the conjuror and the snake-charmer. The Burman juggler (*myet-hlè sayâ*) makes no pretence of occult powers, not even to children. His name implies that his movements "elude the eye;" but his legerdemain does not attain to the art of the Indian and Chinese jugglers. The snake-charmer, on the other hand (*âlambè sayâ*), pretends to be protected by magic. He is tattooed all over with snakes; he has slits at the side of his tongue which he shows, and in other ways he plays upon credulity. It has been alleged that the snake-men inoculate themselves with the venom, but this is not authenticated, though it is known from the experiments of Calmette and Fraser that immunity can be produced in this way. The cobra (*mwye-hauk*) is exhibited, but only when the hamadryad (*nganbôk*), a much larger species of the same family, cannot be procured (p. 96). The snakes are exhibited in their natural

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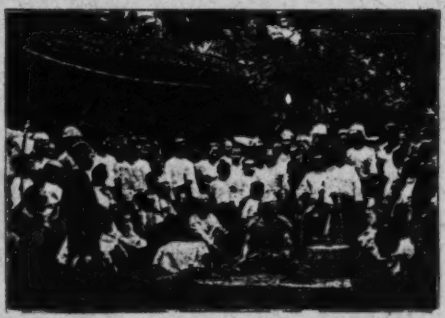

409. BURMAN JUGGLER.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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418. SUNLAUNG AT THADINDYUT FESTIVAL.

and, in order to possess its proper value, should be completed in a day and a night. This is the only approach to a vigil. The texture is loose, and broad bands of tinsel are shot through to make up the woof faster.

Tawthalín is a minor festival, falling in Lent, and observed only in Pegu. The *Tawthalín* offerings are distinguished by being in thousands, one thousand little cakes, one thousand plantains, and so on (No. 282). The number one thousand is said to be symbolical

[801] of the thousand *gâta* or stanzas of the *Wéthandayâ zat*, the legend of Gawdama Buddha's last incarnation but one, closely prefiguring the final incarnation.

782 The above are the Buddhist festivals, which are celebrated by the whole population together, with all the *éclat* they can give them. The only other 776 recurring observances of a religious character have nothing to do with Buddhism, and are rejected by all earnest and enlightened Buddhists. These observances, if not furtively conducted, as is often the case, are kept by individuals only, or by households at a time; they have sufficient in common with the *nat* worship of the hill tribes, to show what the original Burman and Taláing worship may have been. Unlike the Karén, who knows only of evil *nats*, the Burman has both good and evil spirits. The former belong

776 to the land of the *zat* ro-
772 mance, the latter are chiefly
775 the survival of the primitive paganism. In the Burman cosmogony, *nat-yua* is the delectable land to which, by a courtesy analogous to the

[643] German "*hoch-*" and "*höchst-selig*," the kings are said to migrate at their demise.

[524] A higher order than *nat* is *thadyâ* and *thadyâ-min*, and above these the highest order of being, *byammâ*, the cloud-

419. FIRE-BALLOONS AT THADINDYUT.